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VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

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December 2010

President's Message

Scott Joseph, KI6YYZ

Merry Christmas and a warm holiday greeting to you and your family from the W6VVR Vaca Valley Radio Club! Once again we will enjoy each other's company at our annual December Christmas Party next Wednesday evening. This year the venue is the Kings Buffet in Vacaville. The address is: 601 Orange Drive, Vacaville, CA. We begin at 6pm as usual. Bring your family and appetite.

We will also be having our Amateur Radio gift exchange which is a tradition. Bring an Amateur Radio related gift item of about $10 with you. We have some really good items every year.

2010 was a good year for the club. We had a ton of fun at Larry and Sue Hogue's QTH last June with our 2010 Field Day station. Look at page 69 in *QST* magazine this month to see our club listed in the 1A category.

Merriment on Main was well attended by club members and friends. The WX was typically cold but not rainy. The service to our community that we provided along with other groups helped the organizers of MM more than you can imagine.

I look forward to a great 2010 with new officers and a club with more interesting programs, events, and new club members as we go forward. 73!

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November Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by club president Scott KI6YYZ at 7:07PM. The minutes of the October meeting were approved as submitted. The Treasury report was approved as submitted reporting a YTD balance of $2,022.83.

Old Business: Follow up on adding a second signer to the club checking account. Still in progress.

New Business: Merriment on Main sign up and update. Everything is set for MM. Same band plan as years past. 147.51Ø MHz simplex will be our working frequency. Check in at HQ begins at 5PM with operations continuing through 9PM. Assignments will be handed out as members show up.

The winner of the 50/50 $33.00 drawing was Antonio N6ZGB. Woohoo!

An <u>oral admonishment</u> was handed out to the publisher of the newsletter for not publishing the six month ongoing raffle sponsored by Larry W6OMF. The raffle involves a nice two meter base station transceiver that will be raffled off to those present at club meetings for six consecutive months. We are now entering month 4 of 6 with the December meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:09PM

2010 Merriment on Main

By Jerry Olive KD6WKY

The 2010 Merriment on Main which represents the community tree lighting ceremony is now history. 27 times Merriment on Main has taken place, 19 of them with W6VVR as a community organization participant. We should be proud of that.

Right at 5pm everyone started showing up at Tax Advantage on Merchant Street with red shirts, radios, and warm clothes. Auspicious excitement just oozed from everyone involved.

I had the Chamber of Commerce Lost and Found station down on Parker and Main. All the way on the other end of the event yet packed with people moving up the street toward the light, the light of the Christmas tree glowing brightly with red and green bulbs into the foggy night. It was beautiful.

Net control had everything humming along smoothly with radio checks on a regular basis.

Mike W6MAV, Scott KI6YYZ, and I took a short walk down to the Vacaville Museum for a cup of hot onion soup. There must have been 100 people there sitting around talking, eating, and having a good time. All the houses along Buck Avenue were lit up festively with horse carriages full of smiling people trotting up and down the avenue. Man...what a sight, what a sound!

The Vacaville High School Band Drum Line performed in the Gold's Gym parking lot and drew a nice crowd. They were on it!

Mike W6MAV had all kinds of people coming up to him hugging him and talking to him, mostly women. What a friendly guy! You'd get the impression that Mike knew everybody by the way he was greeting every few minutes. I guess that's what happens when you grow up and live in Vacaville for a lifetime.

There will be an after action review soon. If you have any input contact me so I can pass your suggestion along to the event organizers for 2011. Merry Christmas everyone!

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB—2009
ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Scott Joseph, KI6YYZ
Vice President: Kim Ware, KI6JNX
Secretary: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Director: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6ZGB
Director: Glen Mitchell W6JLX

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Open
Activities Chairperson: Board of Directors
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

2010 ARRL 10 Meter Contest

The bands are wide open. If you have a Technician Class license and want to work a really fun and easy contest this is it. You'll get some DX for sure.

This contest is all about talking to as many other radio amateurs as possible on the 10 meter band in each of the 80 ARRL Sections.

You don't need much, just a radio and an antenna that works on 10 meters. Just work in the Technician portion of the band, 28,300 MHz through 28,500 MHz Upper Side Band and talk away. It's all simplex with a simple exchange of call sign, signal report and ARRL Section.

Invitation: If you want to take a crack at it call Jerry KD6WKY at 422-6777 weekdays or 469-8678 evenings. You can come by on Sunday afternoon and strap on a microphone for awhile. It's easy.

Talk on the radio, enjoy the Christmas tree, drink hot tea, what more could you want?

The Spratly Islands DXpedition Gets Wings

The 37 operators from 15 countries who make up the DX0DX DXpedition Team that will go to the Spratly Islands are finalizing preparations for the almost month-long DXpedition that begins January 6, 2011. Instead of going by boat, the team will instead fly to Thitu Island where they will set up their operation. Thitu is the second largest island in the Spratly Islands. The Spratlys are a group of more than 750 reefs, islets, atolls, cays and islands in the South China Sea between Vietnam, the Philippines, China, Malaysia and Brunei. They comprise less than 4 square kilometers of land area, spread out over more than 425,000 square kilometers of sea.

"The boat that would have ferried the operators was damaged in heavy sea and needed substantial repairs," said DX0DX Team

2011 Club Officers

The 2011 club officers have been elected. They are:

President: Scott Joseph KI6YYZ
Vice President: Marcus Maclean KI6WDX
Secretary: Jerry Olive KD6WKY
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt W6HEW

Board of Directors

Skip Lawson AF6HC
Chris Jones KD7TQO
Antonio Del Rio N6ZGB
Tom Christman KE6MDM

heavy sea and needed substantial repairs," said DX0DX Team Leader Chris Dimitrijevic, DU8/VK3FY on the DX0DX Web site, and "aviation transport to and from the island became available. The charter of a twin-engine aircraft adds to the expense of the DXpedition and the personal costs for all taking part in it. Smaller sea transport will still be used to get equipment and supplies to the island."

Dimitrijevic said that there is "real excitement within the Amateur Radio community about this particular DXpedition, and most of the operators just can't wait to be part of action. It is much more than activating a rare DX spot. There is no doctor or health service on the island. As part of a humanitarian contribution, two DXpedition members who are doctors -- Josette Docherty, VK2FXGR, and Edward Soriano, 4F1OZ -- will provide medical checks to the island's residents." Amateur Radio Victoria -- a club in Australia -- announced it will make a substantial donation directly to purchase medical supplies for use as part of the humanitarian effort.

Other equipment include 10 HF transceivers (four each for CW and SSB, plus two for the digital modes), a VHF transceiver for 6 and 2 meters and 70 and 23 cm), eight generators with associated electromagnetic interference (EMI) filters, 11 laptop computers, four vertical antennas, a 2 element Yagi, two 80 meter 4 -squares, two 40 meter 4-squares and 14 amplifiers, as well as headsets, foot switches and interfaces. There will also be moonbounce (EME) activity during the DXpedition. There will be four dedicated operating camps, one each for SSB, CW, RTTY and VHF/UHF operations.

The DX0DX Team is keen to give out contacts on 160 meters and will have two 65 foot phased verticals and a back-up antenna for this. "The DXpedition will be doing its utmost to satisfy the demand for contacts on the Top Band," Dimitrijevic said. The DXpedition was extended a week to be able to be on the air for the CQ 160 Meter Contest. "This limited extension was carefully considered and agreed to in light of strong interest from Top Band contesters and the 160 meter band being the highest sought after in the DX0DX Web site online survey."

"A new high tide photographic survey commissioned by the DXpedition has confirmed that the island's coastline and available beach has dramatically changed from what was previously known, due to rising sea levels and sea erosion," said Dimitrijevic. "This has meant a change in some aspects of the location of antennas and operating camps, but being fully aware in advance has enabled Station Layout Coordinator David Collingham, K3LP, and other DX0DX Team members to ensure it does not have a significant impact to the DXpedition plans."

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988 General Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM 420 Vine Street Fire Station.

Wheelchair accessible

DXpeditions Can Be Dangerous

Small, remote islands such as the Spratlys have little economic value in themselves, but are important in establishing international boundaries. There are rich fishing grounds and geological surveys indicate the area may contain significant oil and gas reserves. As such, many countries claim the islands for their own, including the Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam, the People's Republic of China and Republic of China (Taiwan). Additionally, Brunei claims Louisa Reef, as well as an Exclusive Economic Zone around that and neighboring reefs.

On March 31, 1979, just three days out since departing Brunei, North Borneo -- six hams -- Harry Meade, VK2BJL; Stew Woodward, K4SMX; Bill Poellmitz, K1MM; John Ackley, KP2A, Austin Regal, N4WW, and Bob Schenck, N2OO -- were on the boat *Banyandah* that would take them to the Spratlys. The boat was captained by the husband-wife team of Jack and Judith Binder. In the February 1998 issue of *QST*, Schenck recounted their trip: "We all cheered when we first spotted Amboyna Cay in the distance. It first appeared as a small white speck on the horizon. It was sheer torture in slow motion as we slowly crept closer. As we watched, our mood went from joy, to confusion, to despair, to hope, to sheer horror!"

When the boat was about one mile from the island, they saw that there were structures on the beach. Since the aerial photographs from only months before showed no structures and no people, the hams and crew were perplexed. "We saw no flag or other indication as to what country was represented on the island," Schenck wrote. "Could they be Filipino fishermen?"

Binder wrote in his ship's log that as the boat got closer to the island, he, his wife and the six amateurs could see "three distinct groups of people visible on that tiny mound of sand, a group at each end with a smaller number on the top. The 'top' hardly more than two meters above the sea. The smaller centralized group has begun signaling us with semaphore flags."

At that point, Jack Binder and Woodward decided to go to the island in the dinghy and check things out. "Suddenly the person sending the semaphore threw down his flags," Schenck recalled. "Within seconds, we heard four loud canon blasts from the island! The shells missed us by a wide margin, but their

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at:
http://www.jcis.net/~hewbob/vvrc
Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3

The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 7pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.200(-) WV6F 440.025(+)
W6OMF Repeater 224.540 MHz, PL 118.8 Hz.

message was clear -- we were not welcome." Binder wrote in his log that as they began their final approach to the island, one operator was at the radio scanning the bands and listening for a possible contact with the island. They were then shot at by the people on the island and got out of the area quickly. "We quickly put the 2 knot diesel into gear, put up the sails and steered away from Amboyna Cay," said Schenck.

The boat returned to Brunei. Regal went back to the States, but Ackley and Schenck stayed in Brunei while the other three amateurs went back out in search of an island; Ackley and Schenck agreed to maintain a backup operation as VS5KV and VS5OO. Eventually, Binder assisted Mead, Woodward and Poellmitz get to what he called "a tiny scrap of sand." The reef was Barque Canada Reef, a 30 foot wide sand cay that was only a foot or two above water at high tide. Here the three amateurs set up what became 1S1DX, making nearly 14,000 QSOs

In 1982, a Singapore yacht operated by the owner and his wife were carrying four German hams on a DXpedition to Amboyna *Cay* in the Spratlys. The boat was fired upon by Vietnamese forces. Diethelm Mueller, DJ4EI, was hit by an artillery round and fell overboard as the yacht caught fire. The rest of the party drifted for 11 days on debris, but Gero Band, DJ3NG, passed away from thirst the day before the group was rescued by a passing Japanese freighter and taken to Hong Kong. *--Thanks to DX0DX DXpedition Public Affairs Leader Jim Linton VK3PC for some of the information*

ISS Expedition 24/25 Crew Back on Terra Firma

After more than 160 days in space, ISS Expedition 25 Commander Doug Wheelock, KF5BOC -- along with Flight Engineers Shannon Walker, KD5DXB, and Fyodor Yurchikhin, RN3FI -- has returned to Earth from the International Space Station (ISS), landing in Kazakhstan on Friday, November 26. While on board the ISS, both Wheelock and Walker participated in the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program, and made 22 ISS-to-school and ISS-to-camp QSOs. In addition, Wheelock averaged about two dozen casual QSOs each week while on board the ISS.

During his last few weeks in space, Wheelock sent down a note to Johnson Space Center, asking to increase the number of ARISS contacts from one per week to two a week during his last month on the ISS. According to ARRL ARISS Program Manager Rosalie White, K1STO, Wheelock said he enjoyed the contacts with children, calling them "priceless." White said that the ARISS Team quickly reviewed the list of schools on the ARISS waiting list and set up contacts for Wheelock.

In a 20 minute video taken aboard the ISS, Wheelock gave a tour of the ISS, even making a few ham radio contacts while passing over North America (the ham radio portion of the video begins at the 10:38 mark). In a conversation with Craig Fox, N6RSX, of Brea, California, Wheelock said he was most looking forward to "Bluebell ice cream and a two pound bag of peanut M&Ms" upon his return from space. After a few laughs, he amended that and said he was most looking forward to "fresh vegetables and fruits."

Back in 2005, Bill McArthur, KC5ACR, logged more than 1750 contacts and received honorary Worked All States, Worked All Continents and DX Century Club awards from the ARRL on 2 meters for NA1SS. "It is unknown at this point how many total QSOs Doug has made -- I doubt his family has let him out of their sight to talk to anyone since he returned from the ISS," White said. "But the ARISS Team knows he gave Bill a run for the money at beating his record QSO total. And Norm Fusaro, W3IZ -- who handles the QSLing for the US ARISS contacts at ARRL Headquarters -- ran out of NA1SS QSL cards!" Will it be enough to beat McArthur's record?

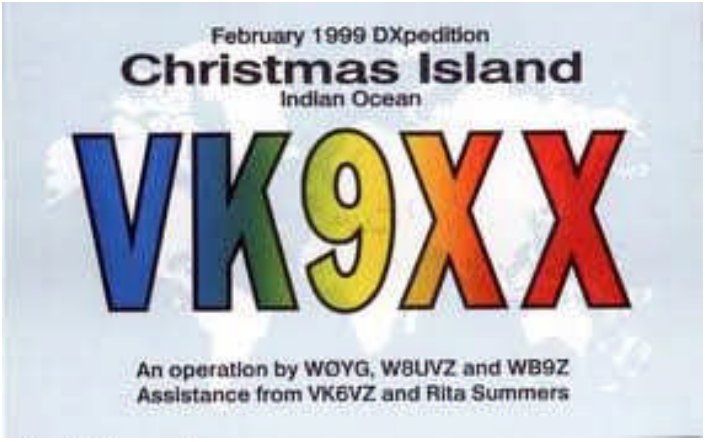
NASA ISS Ham Radio Project Engineer Kenneth Ransom, N5VHO -- who is at Johnson Space Center -- concurred: "Doug has been making about 20-30 general contacts on the days he is on the air, and has probably topped the 500 QSO mark. His final total may turn out to be higher than our most active rag-chewing astronaut, Bill McArthur."

White said she has received many e-mails from hams who write about how much fun it was to get to talk with Wheelock on the

and those e-mails are still arriving: “It’s great fun to respond to these hams since their excitement shows through in their e-mails.” One such e-mail was from Erik Janssens, K5WW, of Bracketville, Texas: “The QSO with Doug Wheelock was totally unexpected, on my way back from a shopping trip! It was exhilarating!”

During their mission, the Expedition 24/25 crew members worked on more than 120 microgravity experiments in human research, biology and biotechnology, physical and materials sciences, and technology development, as well as Earth and space sciences. The astronauts also responded to an emergency shutdown of half of the station’s external cooling system and supported three unplanned spacewalks by Wheelock and Expedition 24 Flight Engineer Tracy Caldwell Dyson, KF5DBF, to replace the faulty pump module that caused the shutdown. Their efforts restored the station’s critical cooling system to full function.

A new trio of flight engineers -- NASA astronaut Catherine Coleman, KC5ZTH, Russian cosmonaut Dmitry Kondratyev and Paolo Nespoli, IZ0JPA, of the European Space Agency -- are scheduled to launch from Kazakhstan on December 15. They will dock with the ISS and join its crew on December 17. *--Thanks to NASA for some information*



PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely — Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
Street: _____
City: _____Zip: _____
Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)
License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)
E-Mail Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
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MEMBER Dues ----------$20.00_____
Each Family Member ---$ 2.00_____
Student ----------$ 5.00_____
Repeater/Autopatch donation--- _____
Call/Name badge ---------$10.00_____
Optional ARRL membership
ARRL dues----------$37.00_____
Senior is 65 yr or older with one time proof on age.

Total---------- _____
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November Club Meeting

Board Meeting 7:00PM
General Meeting 7:30PM
Wednesday, November 11, 2009

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